



CLINICAL REMARKS, 1

ON

FEVER

ACCOMPANIED

WITH PETECHIÆ, TYPHUS, AND ERUP-
TIVE STATES OF THE SYSTEM,

AS IT APPEARED IN

GILMANTON AND VICINITY,

IN THE YEAR

1813.

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Clinical Remarks.

THE mortality of the prevailing epidemic, passing through different sections of the United States, which, wherever it appears, fills every breast with consternation and anxiety, and from its precursors and concomitants, perhaps not being universally known in this vicinity and others, it is seldom recognized till by its ravages it proclaims its genera.

These considerations induce us to present to the public a succinct account of Fever as it appeared in Gilmanton and vicinity, with petechiæ, typhus, and eruptive states of the system, in the year 1813, with the method of treatment; being careful to state facts explicitly, both as it respects its precursors, concomitants, and method of cure.

For the sake of plainness and precision, its diagnostics will be divided into three different sets

1. When it attacked the brain.
2. When it attacked the lungs.
3. When it seized upon the extremities, and, in the progress of the disease, settled upon the brain, or lungs, or both.

1. When it attacked the brain, there was a fixed acute pain in the forehead and one or both eyes, accompanied with dilatation and contraction of the pupils, or they contracted almost to a point, remaining nearly stationary: this symptom was justly considered highly alarming, which sooner or later, according to the violence of the disease, was succeeded by a suffusion, or of pain of the afterpart, attended with violent pulsation of the carotid and temporal arteries, and excessive heat of the head. Large dēpositions of lymph sometimes succeeded, generally, on the course of the former. The extremities were cold, especially the inferior—the skin constricted, pale, and dry, except the face, which generally wore a florid hue; the pulse at the wrists feeble and irregular, sometimes intermitting and quite imperceptible, accompanied in most cases with a paralysis of one side, generally the left, the eye opposite to which, the patient was unable to close: or to convey an idea which shall not be mistaken, the pulse on one side was considerably full, while on the other it was scarcely perceptible. Respiration small and anxious at first, but soon became more laborious, till at length stertor ensued; cold rigors darted down the back and loins, thence

over the body, attended with tremor of the whole system, of the tongue in particular, when attempted to be run out, which was moist, and covered with a whitish coat.—The urine was high colored and small in quantity at first, which soon became pale, and, on standing, deposited a large quantity of coagulated lymph: nausea and vomiting accompanied generally from the commencement; what was evacuated at first was mostly a cold viscid phlegm, which was soon succeeded by that of a dark bilious cast.—The countenance became distorted, and changed to a livid hue, attended in some instances with double vision.—A high delirium or stupor soon ensued, and petechiæ or vibices appeared on the forehead, temples, and face, thence extending over the body, the sphincters ani et vesica refused to do their office; and though we often attempted to rouse the patient, profound coma prevailed, and they sunk insensible into the arms of death!

2. When it attacked the lungs, they complained of a fulness of the præcordia and stomach, of nausea, and vomited, or essayed to; however, but little was evacuated, and they appeared unable to inflate the lungs.—

Respiration small and anxious as above, accompanied with sighing, restlessness, and often shifting of place, which, toward the close of the disease, when fatal, was attended with singultus.—Extremities cold and numb, with great prostration of strength, and depraved action of the sensitive organs, and cold rigors as above delineated: the pulse intermittent, small, and unequal in frequency and strength; though in some cases it was considerably accelerated and full: when this occurred, there was universally a fixed acute pain in the region of the side or stomach, and to one unacquainted with its insidious meanderings, would have indicated the use of the lancet.—The eyes appeared languid, and sunk in their orbits; the nose dry, and the nostrils contracted; the tongue drier than above described, covered at its apex, and on the sides, with a whitish coat, while the roots and middle appeared of a dirty brown or yellow color; fordes collected on the lips and teeth the fourth or fifth day; petechiæ or ecchymosis appeared on various parts of the body; the urine, as above described, accompanied with dysuria; large floculi of coagulated lymph floated on its surface, in which a small quantity of

cruor was visible, and on standing, emitted a disagreeable fetor in some cases: delirium, if any, was very moderate, and for the most part the intellectual functions remained unimpaired to the last.——Those who failed, generally languished till the seventh or eighth day before death closed the truly solemn and distressful scene!

3. When primarily the extremities, and in the progress of the disease, the brain or lungs, or both, became affected, its characteristics were slight; shifting pains in various parts of the body, as the fingers, wrists, elbows, hips, knees, heels, toes, &c.—These were not always present in the system, nor were they severe; but were attended with a sense of heat and weakness, and had been considered as rheumatism by the patients, they having been troubled with them for a considerable lapse of time previous to confinement: nausea and vomiting likewise attended: the pulse and respiration as above, though in some mild cases there was but little alteration. A scarlet eruption made its appearance perhaps in one case in five only, whose pustules were distinct, and contained a small quantity of limpid serum, which, on being discharged, healed kindly, though

in some instances they matured, sphacelated, and cast off; the appearance of which was conical: these last discharged a sanious matter, and seldom healed till the patient was convalescent. Petechiæ or vibices made their appearance in some cases previous to confinement, and were discernible after the patient were able to walk their room. A soreness of the throat, hysteria, and hypochondriasis, were frequent concomitants: urine and disuria as above. Teretes were almost always present in the primæ viæ, and in children seemed to demand immediate attention; but were treated as of minor consequence, excepting in one case; and though this did not prove mortal, yet it was very troublesome and lengthy. Tumors sometimes occurred in various parts; and on being opened, discharged good pus, and healed kindly.—The appetite but little altered in some cases, though generally there was a loathing of food.—Deafness in a number occurred, which was of a temporary nature: sleep disturbed; and, after taking of repose, in many there was an unconsciousness of it. In some cases the patients were seized with syncope and diarrhœa; in these the prostration of strength almost ex-

ceeded belief: the vital energy appeared to have forsaken the system, the eyes were glassy, and the pupils greatly contracted, the extremities cold, and the pulsation gone at the wrists, and the systole and diastole of the heart scarcely perceptible.—In one case the patient was attacked with pain in one finger, which progressed to the brain, observing the course of the inferior cubital nerve, similar to aura epileptica, and was soon accompanied by the first mentioned concomitants. This soon terminated fatally.

The paroxysm in some observed a considerable degree of regularity, though not generally. The duration of the disease was matter of uncertainty; a few days, in some mild cases, terminated it, while in others five or six weeks were necessary to effect a cure.

The first three or four hours, after the attack, were considered very precious to the patients; and the importance of the object will be our justification, if we urge the immediate call of a physician acquainted with the disease, a strict compliance with his prescriptions, and perseverance, let the concomitants be what they may; as they

are frequently restored when from appearances past all hope.

We find ourselves lost in conjecture, and utterly unable to give a satisfactory reason for these sudden transitions from high health to a state truly deplorable and highly alarming; but death to us does not appear to take place in these violent cases from a state of inflammation or putrefaction in the system, but from a sudden prostration of the excitability or vital energy.

The method of cure pursued by us, was,

1. To remove the torpor of the stomach.

2. To cleanse the stomach by a liberal use of emetics.

3. To remove the torpor of the capillary vessels, by stimulants, external heat, and friction, producing a free perspiration, thereby restoring the excitability or vital energy.

4. To obviate various other concomitants, with such medicine as each particular case in our judgment required.

The medicine we were in the habit of using were—Ipecac. zincum vitriolat.—Rad. serpt. virg. feneka, valeriana, rhei, colombo—Cantharides, calo. gm. camphor, opii.—Olricini, piperit, pulegii, cinnamo.—Spt.

æther vit. sal soda, tart.--Cort. eleuth. nux moschata, wine, brandy, &c. according to the particular situation, age, sex, condition, and violence of the attack.

Or our method and application of cure may be comprehended in the following order, viz. By removing the torpor of the stomach, by stimuli, preceding the use of emetics, with camphor, brandy, &c; by removing the morbid matter from the stomach, by a liberal use of emetics, of ipecac. zincum vitriolat., &c. which at the same time determined the fluids from the center to the circumference of the body; by removing the torpor of the capillary vessels with the assistance of external heat, friction &c.; to answer which intention, sinapisms were directed to be applied to the feet; bricks, after being heated, were partially quenched in vinegar, and placed to the feet. knees, hips, &c. and, if necessary, flies steeped in vinegar were used by friction, &c. by keeping up a healthy and regular perspiration by a free use of camphor, seneka, serpentaria virginiana, &c. after the operation of the emetics, by cold applied and vesicatories to the head and breast to prevent coma, extravasations, and dépositions on

these important organs, if the heat of the head was excessive; for which purpose linen cloths, folded thick, and after being immersed in cold water, or vinegar, or vinegar and salt, were applied to the same; and by epispastic to the forehead or nape of the neck; and if there was danger of extravasations on the lungs, they were applied to the breast; and, by obviating all the other concomitants that appeared, with such medicine as the judgment directed.

In cold weather, it was necessary to prevent the emetics from taking the motion of the bowels; as a small operation sunk the patient extremely; for which purpose, an anodyne was generally administered; but, in cases where the brain was primarily affected, we give it as our opinion that they had better have been omitted, as in some cases they appeared to increase the comatose state. Would it not answer a more valuable purpose to administer an enema, with which a generous quantity of liq. laudanum was combined?

The bowels were generally kept closed until the symptoms were broken, or till the third or fourth day, when cathartics were directed; those whose operation was

mild, causing little irritation, were exhibited.

It was necessary, in some cases, to prescribe emetics to the fourth, fifth, or sixth time, or more; and after we thought the stomach perfectly cleansed, there would often remain a feverish heat and irritability in the system, for which it was difficult to assign a reason, the patient remaining *statu quo*, till by the exhibition of another emetic, the achæ of the *primæ viæ*, viz. the septic acid, was expelled, the heat and irritability gone; after which the patient was soon able to go about his usual avocation, paying very particular attention to his diet, being careful not to overload his stomach.--Relapses in a number of instances occurred; and, in some cases, might be said to be in consequence of inattention on the part of the patients, to the above directions, and exposure to cold.

In Gilmanton, of those who failed, the principal part were, in their origin, affections of the brain; and, on our arrival, had become comatose, a state much easier to prevent than to remove; but two or three died in consequence of the lungs being the part primarily affected, one of which we were indulged with an examination: this

patient we did not see till the third or fourth day after the attack.—We were informed a number of emetics had been administered, none of which operated with much force. On laying the contents of the thorax open to view, small air vesicles appeared in the mediastinum, some of which were ruptured, and an extravasation of blood on the os sternum: the superior part of the left lobe of the lungs, of a dark color; in the lobules of which, the air vesicles were blown up, ruptured and contorted in the middle; while in the inferior extremity no vestige of air vesicles, blood vessels, &c. could be discovered, by reason of extravasation; and when cut, would sink even with the surface of the water; the inferior portion of the right were nearly natural as to color, the air vesicles blown up and ruptured through the whole cellular substance. On the external surface of the liver, bright yellow spots or dépositions of bile were visible, some of which were more than an inch in length. The gall-bladder did not contain an over proportion of bile. The diaphragm was of a livid or dark brick color.—On removing the external teguments of the brain, there appeared small

spots or extravasations of blood under the sagittal future on the dura mater, and effusions of lymph on the small folds of the vessels of the pia mater, at their extremities where they anastomize with the veins, the glandular part nearly natural, while small dark spots appeared in the medullares. Owing to the lateness of the hour when notified, we made but a superficial examination, as the friends of the deceased were collected to perform the sepulchral rites. However, nothing which would have prevented his recovery was discovered in the examination of the brain.

In affections of the lungs, the patient generally languished till the seventh or eighth day, if they proved mortal: of the brain, those who failed, died from four to eight-and-forty hours from the first attack.

We have been frequently asked, Is there nothing to prevent the approach of this truly alarming disorder? To which we now reply, that a regular and warm diet, a temperate use of ardent spirits, avoiding all extremes, with the use of flannel next the skin universally; being careful to keep the feet dry and warm, and the head cool, are as good prophylactics as occur to our minds,

It is likewise necessary to keep the system free from worms, especially in children.

Would not emetics be of service?—We observed, that in damp, stormy weather, or when the wind was easterly, new cases were more frequent, and the sick were generally worse: on the contrary, in clear weather, and the wind to the westward, they were better, and in the most desperate cases there was a revival, and few new ones occurred. Generally speaking, the land was of a southern declivity, and adjacent to water, where the disorder raged with the most violence.

As the spring advanced, the fever assumed a pneumonic type, which was soon succeeded by that of a typhus state; the principal part were cases mild in degree, and yielded to the foregoing method of cure in a few days: however, we combined tart. antimony with the ipecac., and have been in the habit of exhibiting the gm. camphor in substance and in large doses.—We would observe, that although calomel is too slow in its operation to be trusted to in violent cases at first, yet we have found it to be a regular and powerful stimulant; and when it has been exhibited by

us, combined with gm. opii, et camphor or ipecac. it has answered many valuable purposes, and in those patients where a pyralism ensued, it was considered a favorable omen. Cinchona was inadmissible in substance; but in the form of Huxham's tincture, in lengthy cases attended with typhus, great benefit was experienced from its use; likewise a strong decoction was combined with liq. laud. and yeast for enemas in cases of violent diarrhœa.

The following is a statement of our treatment of a few of the numerous cases which occurred in the year 1813.

CASE I.

April 26.—Mrs. ----, of a slender constitution, aged about 50, after doing the washing of her family, complained of a pain at the stomach, and took a moderate dose of spts. camphor, was instantaneously seized with an involuntary diarrhœa which was very fetid, not having any command of the bowels. On our arrival, found her sunk very low, the pulse about 120, and scarcely perceptible; the countenance languid the pupils contracted, and excessive heat of the

head; the extremities being cold. Immediately administered an emetic, which operated powerfully, and caused two motions of the bowels. Applied an epispastic to the forehead and nape of the neck, and directed to apply flies with vinegar by friction to the extremities, sinapisms to the feet, and bricks prepared to the hips, knees, and legs; at the same time directed the head to be kept wet with cold vinegar and salt: after the operation of the emetic, the patient took ol. cinnamo., or spt. camphor, or a decoction of rad. serpt. virg., once in thirty minutes, and occasionally a small dose of elix. asthmat.

April 27.—Were informed the diarrhœa had subsided, the pulse about 100, the skin moist; continued the medicine as the day before, except in not being given so often, with the addition of powders composed of gm. opii. et camphor, which were directed to be administered once in four hours.

April 28.—The patient about the same; continued the medicine; a longer space of time intervening.

April 29.—Patient about the same, except the pulse, which were about 95; medicine continued.

April 30.—Patient about the same, pulse 82; gave a cathartic of rhei, sal. tart. and sem. anis.: continued the medicine as before, except the elix. asthmat. and gm. opii.

May 1.—Pulse about 80; the patient convalescent; directed rhei and sal. tart. to be given in a state of effervescence.

May 2.—Pulse from 75 to 80; directed a decoction from rad. colombo and lig. quassia to be taken occasionally.

CASE II.

Mrs. -----, aged about 35, of a good constitution, was attacked with fever July 9—were informed, that the first knowledge the family had of her illness, was a derangement; found her comatose, administered an emetic, composed of ipecac. and tart. ant. in a liberal dose, which did not operate; in 20 minutes repeated it again, which not operating, 4 grs of vit zinci. was given; at the same time these were administered, gave saturated tinct. camphor freely to the patient—having taken about one ounce of ipecac. judged it prudent to desist—nothing of consequence was evacuated from the stomach upward; but the discharge from the bowels was profuse, and very fetid—countenance languid and sunk—pulse feeble, being about

100, and irregular—extremities cold—pupils contracted: applied an epispastic to the forehead, and directed cantharides to be used by friction, &c. A decoction of serpt. was administered in liberal doses every thirty minutes; ess. piperit. and elix. camphor, as occasion required.

July 20.—The operation of the bowels had considerably abated, the comatose state still remaining—applied an epispastic to the afterpart of the head—directed powders, composed of gm. opii., cam. and ipecac. to be administered every four hours, and a decoction of rad. valeri. and seneka, as occasion required—the pulse about the same.

July 21 —The diarrhoea had subsided—other symptoms as yesterday. Continued the medicine as before, with the addition of ol. cinnamo. occasionally—pulse from 90 to 95.

July 22.—Comatose state abating, the bowels closed, the pulse about the same; continued the alterative powders, serpt. with the addition of soda

July 23.—Patient convalescent, the comatose state gone, pulse about 73; directed rhei. and sal. tart. in large doses to be given in a state of effervescence, to answer the intention of a cathartic; continued the medi-

cine, except the powders and ol. cinnamo.

July 26—The patient still convalescent; prescribed colombo and lig. quas. for a bitter; continued the soda, and gave ol. ricini for a cathartic.

CASE III.

Master ———, a lad, aged about 6 years, of a good constitution, after slight complaint, was prescribed an emetic, &c. which operated moderately; and on the following evening was considered free from disease; asked for cider, but was dissuaded therefrom. The following morning he was permitted, on having his over-coat on, to go into another room, where, the family being busied in preparing breakfast, he made free to help himself to a few nuts without the knowledge of them. About 11 o'clock, A. M. we were called for; but being absent, did not arrive till late in the day; one of the nurses had given an emetic, which had operated; a large quantity was evacuated, which had the appearance of food in a pulposus state, and on searching his pockets they discovered a number of nuts. On our arrival he was comatose; and it might be truly said, was not a subject of medicine; his pulse about 120, irregular and feeble; he died in a few hours!

CASE IV.

Master ———, aged about 13, of a good constitution, complained of a load at the stomach, and erratic pain. His father called for and received an emetic, which operated favorably; and in the after part of the same day we were informed by him, he believed that his son would escape a fever; however, after having eaten a bowl of bread and milk at even, he soon complained of a load and pressure in the region of the stomach. We were called about midnight; found him in a convulsive and comatose state; gave an emetic; no operation of consequence ensued; and though every endeavor was used for his recovery, he died the day following.

In giving this plain and concise, but faithful narrative, we have avoided, as much as possible, the technical terms made use of by medical authors and the fraternity; choosing, with our united endeavors, to be useful to many, rather than to be understood but by a few; and if this shall be the means of disseminating a knowledge of the disease, its symptoms, and method of cure, to one town, society, family, or person, or be the instrument in the hands of Providence of the restoration of health to one or

more of the human family, our intentions will be amply remunerated.

A GLOSSARY

TO THE FOREGOING WORK.

Achan, septic acid

Aura epileptica, a sensation, as of a blast of cold air ascending from the extremities to the heart and head

Anodyne, a medicine to ease pain

Anastomize, the communication of vessels with one another

Concomitants, attendant symptoms

Coma, an inclination to sleep

Cruor, thick, red part of the blood

Convalescent, recovering of health

Capillary vessels, small blood vessels on the surface

Cathartic, medicines which cause the motion of the

Cellular, consisting of little cells or cavities [bowels

Dilatation, to enlarge

Delirium, a disorderly motion of the animal spirits

Dysuria, difficulty and pain in discharging the urine

Diastole, the dilatation of the heart

Deposition, stagnant

Diaphragm, a muscle which divides the trunk of the body into two cavities

Dura mater, a thick membrane which surrounds the brain

Diagnostics, are those signs of a disease which are apparent, and distinguish it from others

Ecchymosis, marks and spots in the skin

Extravasation, the fluids of the body when out of

Effusion, pouring forth [place

Flocci, flakes

Genera, that which makes itself known

Hysteria, nervous complaints or spasms

Hyperchondriasis, a difficult digestion, attended with vapors

Lymph, the transparent or watery part of the blood

Lobules, the separate lobes of the lungs

Mediastinum, the membrane in the middle of the

Nausea, sickness [breast

Petechia, red or purple spots

Pupils, the sight of the eyes

Paroxysm, a fever fit

Perspiration, sweating

Pia mater, the innermost covering of the brain

Pneumonic, tending to an affection of the lungs

Præcordia, the forepart of the region of the thorax

Primæ viæ, the first passages

Precursors, what goes before

Prophylactics, medicines which prevent diseases

Ptyalism, effusion of spittle

Respiration, breathing

Sordes, a collection of morbid matter on the lips, teeth, &c.

Sphacelated, a perfect mortification of a part

Sanious, fetid matter or pus discharged from ulcers

Syncope, a fainting away

Systole, the contraction of the heart

Stupor, numbness

Sternum, the breast

Stertor, noisy respiration

Sagittal suture, a connexion of the bones of the head

Singultus, the hiccup

Statu quo, remaining in the same state

Typhus, debility with irritability of the human

Teretes, worms [system

Thorax, the cavity of the breast



Book taken apart, leaves deacidified
with magnesium bicarbonate. Folds
reinforced, leaves supported on both
sides with lens tissue. Resewed with
new all-rag end paper signatures &
unbleached linen hinges. Rebound in
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